

4. (canceled).

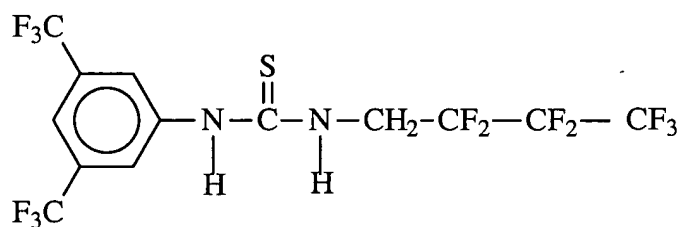
5. (canceled).

6. (canceled).

7. (original): A thiourea according to Claim 1 wherein R^3 is H.

8. (original): A thiourea according to Claim 1 wherein R^4 is H.

9. (currently amended) A thiourea according to Claim 2[[,]] ~~viz. one~~ wherein the substituted thiourea is of the formula



10. (canceled).

11. (canceled).

12. (canceled).

13. (currently amended) A method according to Claim ~~12~~ 19 wherein the noble metal is gold, platinum, silver, palladium or rhodium.

14. (currently amended) A method according to Claim ~~12~~ 19 wherein the ~~superficial~~ supercritical fluid is ~~liquid~~ supercritical carbon dioxide.

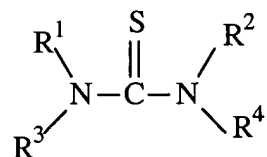
15. (currently amended) A method according to Claim ~~12~~ 19 wherein the treatment with substituted thiourea is performed in the presence of an oxidant.

16. (original): A method according to Claim 15 wherein the oxidant comprises ferric (Fe^{III}) ions.

17. (currently amended) A method according to Claim ~~12~~ 19 wherein the treatment and extraction are carried out at room temperature and are followed by recrystallisation of the product from petroleum ether (~~100-200°~~) at a temperature in the range of 100°C to 120°C.

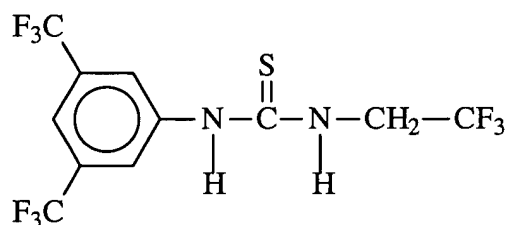
18. (canceled).

19. (new): A method for extracting a noble metal from a matrix, the method comprising the steps of treating the matrix with a substituted thiourea having the general formula

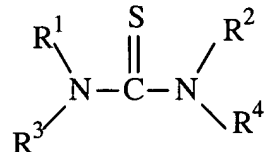


wherein R^1 and R^2 independently comprise an alkyl, alkaryl or aryl group or a substituted derivative thereof, and contain at least one fluorine atom, and each of R^3 and R^4 is selected from the group consisting of H, alkyl, alkaryl, aryl, substituted derivatives of H, alkyl, alkaryl or aryl, and fluorine-containing derivatives, and subjecting the thus treated matrix to supercritical fluid extraction.

20. (new): A substituted thiourea having the general formula

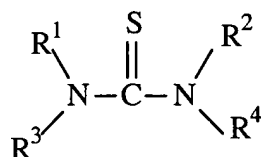


21. (new): Use of a substituted thiourea in the extraction of gold, platinum, silver, palladium or rhodium from a matrix comprising treating the matrix with the substituted thiourea, and subjecting the thus treated matrix to supercritical fluid extraction, the substituted thiourea having the general formula



wherein R^1 and R^2 independently comprise an alkyl, alkaryl or aryl group or a substituted derivative thereof, and contain at least one fluorine atom, and each of R^3 and R^4 is selected from the group consisting of H, alkyl, alkaryl, aryl, substituted derivatives of H, alkyl, alkaryl or aryl, and fluorine-containing derivatives.

22. (new): Use of a substituted thiourea in supercritical carbon dioxide in the solubilising and carrying of noble metals for deposition or impregnation thereof, the substituted thiourea having the general formula



7